

Operation Archangel - A Retelling

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Category: Halo

Genre: Adventure, Sci-Fi

Language: English

Characters: Fred-104, Kelly-087, Linda-058, Master

Chief/John-117

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2013-03-27 12:05:19

Updated: 2013-05-31 16:52:48

Packaged: 2016-04-27 04:09:04

Rating: M

Chapters: 5

Words: 6,262

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Two Spartan teams fight a Covenant Army, in a deserted metropolis for a prize that could save countless lives in the coming months.

1. Chapter 1

Operation Archangel

Chapter 1

John checks the counter on his MA5B, 15 rounds left, more than enough.

He looks across the street to where Fred's crouching behind the demolished warthog that he, Fred, Kelly and Linda were riding in not 2 minutes ago, he pops his head up every now and again unleashing a torrent of shotgun rounds towards the line of jackals; not doing significant damage, but at least he's got them keeping their ugly, avian heads well and truly behind their energy shields.

John and the rest of Blue team had been riding to Rally Point Bravo to hook up with Yellow Team, who he left to defend the LZ. John knew Yellow team hated being stationary, but they drew the short straw. Besides, John-117 and the rest of Blue team had more experience collecting valuable items, and the one they now carry and protect, could save millions within the coming months.

â€|and now they were going to be late.

A Plasma shot scorches the edge of the wall that John is taking cover behind; melting the concrete like glue would polystyrene. Acting on reflex, John rounds the corner, levels his rifle and lets off a short burst of hot metal death. The rounds catch a scrawny, orange and red quilled Jackal off guard, the high explosive rounds tearing the back

of its head off, before ricochetting into the methane tank of a Grunt taking cover behind the line of shielded Jackals.

The subsequent explosion is short and sweet; the Spartans visors automatically polarize to the intensity of the bright blue flash, the armour from the doomed Grunt fragging every living organism within a five meter radius. John smirks.

"Nice shot!" calls Fred.

"Lucky" replies John, but then, John has always been the lucky one.

The gap in the ranks is quickly refilled, much quicker than John expected. "C'mon girls", John says to no one in particular.

A thunderous, guttural roar bellows, which can only mean one thing: Reinforcements. John peers round the corner to see the hulking, drooling forms of Brutes, a Brute pack. Growling, they encourage the Jackals and Grunts forwards, beginning the slow advance towards the two pinned prey. The Brutes looked forward to gnawing on their bones.

"Things just got a whole lot more interesting Chief" says Fred.

John nods and checks the counter.

10 rounds left.

Still Kelly's and Linda's status indicators are red. As a series of grenade rounds from the Brutes grenade launchers, which the UNSC named "The Brute Shot", impacts on Fred's cover, rocking the overturned warthog, nearly toppling the three tonne machine on top of the Spartan II.

"Need to move" says Fred through gritted teeth as the pressure wave beats like a drum across his back.

"Get ready to move, I'll provide cover" - John preps his remaining two grenades, the pins fall to the floor with a jingle.

"On my count, 3, 2," Time slows, John releases the striker leavers, they spin away from his hands in a graceful arc. The grenades are armed.

"1, GO!" cries John.

John tosses the grenades as a pitcher would throw a baseball, his super strength meaning they flew faster than any professional sportsman could ever dare hope for.

The first comes to rest amongst the jackals feet, the other smacking a Brute on the right flank square in the face, breaking its already flat nose an splintering several of its canine teeth. The grenades make a satisfying "CRUMP CRUMP" as they detonate a fraction of a second later, killing a half dozen of the grunts and jackals outright, wounding another half dozen more and effectively decapitating the brute, the roar it had begun to bellow in pain from a broken face finishes as a wet fart escaping from its now exposed wind pipe.

Fred is up and sprinting away from the Warthog before the enemies bodies have even hit the floor, bounding over the rubble from the dead city, mini explosions, spikes and plasma energy nipping at his heels.

Several rounds from those covenant not either not reeling or caring about the devastation wrought by Johns grenades manage to find their mark, flaring Fred's shield, slowly draining the protective charge, 70%, 48%, 22%. Got to move faster, but the incoming fire is heavy and relentless.

John rounds his corner once more and let's rip with the Assault Rifle. The Covenant soldiers are either focusing on Fred or are picking themselves up from the carnage the grenades had done. They're not prepared for him and suffer dearly. Every round impacts on something organic; limbs are torn off from the smaller species or become buried in skulls and chests. Several rounds hit the brute, just right of centre, tearing great chunks of meat out of the monsters throat; it releases a gurgled cry and collapses in a heap, clawing at the sky.

Click.

The analogue counter on the rear of the rifle flashes 00.

Out of ammo.

That's when it happens. Fred's shield continues whittle away: 8%, 1%. The shields dissipate with a pop of static. A spike, strikes Fred between his armour plating in the shoulder blade, sending him spinning like a Dreidel.

John watches on, eyes wide in horror.

"Fred!"

Fred manages somehow to regain his footing and stumbles behind the mass concrete barrier he was originally aiming for, which once would have served as a road block during the evacuation of the cities people.

"Gn...that's gonna be sore in the morning" Fred grunts.

Fred flashes his green light indicator several times to make the point that he's fine and not in need of immediate medical attention. The Master Chief, ducks as more rounds ping off the wall next to him. He attaches his rifle to the magnetic clips between his shoulder blades and unclips the pistol on his thigh.

As John turns the corner to put his remaining rounds down range time, once again moves in slow motion. Standing in front of him is the largest Brute he thinks he may have ever seen, the beast is easily nine feet tall.

A rookie mistake, John was too busy focusing on Fred and never even heard this juggernaut creeping up on his position, which by no means must have been an easy feat. His stomach turns icy and his heart skips a beat, as he looks into the deep, soulless black eyes of this new foe. The massive Brute roars, spittle and remnants of its last

meal flecking onto Johns visor. John raises his pistol.

John saw it before he heard it. Before he can squeeze the trigger the Brutes eyes roll into the back of its head as the sniper rifle round tears out the base of the Brutes skull through its mouth, tearing out meat and bone through a newly formed hole the size of a grapefruit.

Linda.

Linda's and Kelly's status indicators shine bright green, Johns new favourite colour, as two explosions rock the street from Kelly's rocket launcher.

"You two took your time" sighs the Master Chief, standing over the crumpled body of the deceased monster, squeezing his pistol at the defensive line that has begun to break.

"You know us Chief, we like our dramatic entrances" quips Kelly.

The zip, crack of Linda's sniper rifle makes John smile. Linda doesn't miss.

2. Chapter 2

**Chapter 2 **

"What do you suppose is keeping them?" asks Monty over the comm.

"I don't know, John's never late..it can only mean trouble" replied his Chief Petty Officer- Noah 133 "Keep watching your sector and let me know if you see anything"

"Aye Sir" came the reply, as a hiss of static let the Chief know that his scout was off the air.

Noah trusted Monty would do his job, he was the best recon specialist there was going, the first whisper of that Warthog engine, or something worse and Monty 088 could deal with it, he was known to become quite creative with a sniper rifle.

Although short in stature â€“ Monty being the shortest Spartan of all in the Spartan II programme at about 6ft 1in â€“ he more than made up for it with both his physical and mental strength and his sixth sense for trouble, that and he was on par with Linda when it came to sniping abilities.

Noah completed his perimeter sweep and headed back to the LZ. He could see the black armour with yellow detailing of Michelle, his number two should the proverbial shit hit the fan and he was rendered incapacitated.

Michelle 022 reminded him of an Earth Wasp, the species became extinct more than a century ago. But he had learned about them in their lessons with DÃ©jÃ – the Spartan children's AI mentor. Besides the obvious, her armour being yellow and black, Michelle preferred hand to hand combat, and she was proven deadly. 022 would, and could, constantly beat other Spartans during unarmed training exercises. Noah knew she was the one Spartan the enemy would want to keep at, at

least arms length.

"Hey Bro" she casually said. Noah didn't mind. Many years ago, as children on the programme she had adopted Noah as her little brother, why, he wasn't sure, when he asked once she'd simply stated that she had "always wanted a little brother" and the rest was history.

Truth was if any member of another team or, heavens forbid, a senior officer were to hear what she had just called her Chief Petty Officer, they would both be reprimanded until hell had frozen over. It was their little secret, and they revelled in it.

"How's it going Michelle?"

"I'm bored, when do we get to see some action?" she whined.

Noah knew his Spartans were getting edgy,

Yellow Team were considered as the recon specialists of the Spartan teams. Before this deployment they had waged a twenty month guerrilla war on Chartwell IV, wreaking havoc on the Covenant industrial planet until the UNSC main force had arrived and waged all out war on the enemy. That engagement was reportedly still ongoing, but Yellow Team had been extracted early in the main conflict and transported to the UNSC frigate the "Eight of Diamonds" for this special assignment.

After so long on the move, being constantly hunted by the forces of the arch enemy, waiting at the LZ for Blue team to return for this amount of time seemed like an eternity.

But it wasn't just the fact that they felt useless, it was because this area, according to the brief was supposed to be swarming with Covenant.

"Stay frosty, we'll get our shot soon enough, besides, the amount of time Blue team's taking to get back here, I wouldn't be surprised if we had to go get 'em", said the Chief with an invisible smirk beneath his helmet.

"Roger that" â€“ she replied as she looked down and got back to sharpening her knives, the metallic scrape horrifically foreboding Noah mused. It was the noise of nightmares, He thanked the maker which he occasionally prayed to that she was on his side.

Noah walked off, back towards the Pelican, his Battle rifle cradled in his arms as a mother would her child, for all intents and purposes, a relaxed stance given the theatre of war he was a part of.

By Spartan standards, Spartan Chief Petty Officer Noah â€“ 133, was not anything special; he wasn't the quickest, the strongest or the smartest. The thing that set him apart from the rest of his "brothers and sisters" was his confidence, and his faith in their cause. His tutors' said once that he was a natural born leader, his men and women trusted him and his judgements, and would follow him into the very depths of hell if he asked of it.

He sat down beside the Pelican and rested head against the hull,

calling up his teams' tactical objectives and orders on his HUD. He also scanned a large scale map of the city which FleetCOM had kindly provided, waypoint markers and Landing Zones marked out in a variety of colours. It would normally show the location of friendly units within a fifty mile radius, the high rise buildings that littered the city like stalagmites however caused a lot of interference, meaning that Blue Teams location marker was sporadic. He set the map to chime as soon as it had a fix on Johns Teams whereabouts and shut it down.

His eyes started to close for a few moments of meditated rest when a familiar 'thump thump thump' of footsteps headed his way. Noah smiled.

"Want a seat Tim? Best seats in the house I swear" asked the Chief, waving his arm towards the patch of grass next to where he sat.

"Well, seeing as you asked so nicely" replied the heavy weapons specialist of Yellow team, and by far the most popular of the group "Joker" Tim 106.

Tim, near enough weighing a tonne and a half in full armour shook the ground as he sat. He did it on purpose Noah mused, as much as he weighed, Tim was like a feline on the hunt when it came to work "silent, light footed, and had lightning fast reflexes.

Tim always had a knack for explosives, which had been commented on, on more than one occasion by the Brass, and more importantly, Chief Mendez, one of the other Spartan children's mentors back on Reach. Of course there are always side effects of working with such hazardous materials, Tim losing his right eye and arm as he was setting explosives in a Covenant power plant on Ivory Prime two years previous. He was lucky he didn't lose more. Now using a bionic arm, the big Spartan always complained it was never the same as his real one, and that he had trouble shuffling a deck of cards when he played during down time between missions.

Tim earned his nickname in the first weeks of Spartan training, playing more than a few practical jokes on Senior Chief Petty Officer Mendez and his staff. In full armour Tim had made a point painting a menacing red smile, and white facial features of a clown from a fictional story series he used to read in his bunk some nights. All Noah could remember was that the main protagonist had some affection towards Bats, the rest was a faded memory. It was a menacing sight, especially to the more weak minded of his enemies, especially when the Spartans were mainly deployed against human opposition before the Covenant first arrived.

"So when do I get to play with my new toy Chief?" Tim said as he placed down his Brand new out of the box Spartan Laser on the ground.

"You want to be careful with that Spartan; ONI will have a fit if you break the damn thing" said Noah, looking at the city's skyline in front of him.

"I'll be careful, I just wanna toast something, with it, something big...like a Wraith...that'd be awesome" replied Tim, he sounded like a child would on the morning of their birthday wanting desperately to

play on their new bicycle.

They looked at each other and chuckled, then peered out onto the eerie scene of a city with no inhabitants; Noah fell into a trance watching the swings on the children's playground a hundred metres away sway in the wind, creaking through lack of oil.

3. Chapter 3

Chapter 3

Fred winces and swears through gritted teeth as Kelly pulls out the Brute spike.

"That's gunna leave a mark" says Fred, humour masking the pain in his voice.

Kelly doesn't answer him; instead she removes a can of bio-foam from the medic pack salvaged from the wrecked Warthog, and pushes it straight into the wound, pulling the trigger.

As an icy coolness washes through Fred's nervous system, the pain stops almost instantly, the wound now filled with sturdy foam which would fight infection, release morphine and more importantly stop the bleeding. Spartans have a much higher pain threshold and immune system than the average human, but a spike from a brute rifle is covered in a toxin that slowly causes paralysis, but that's only if the victim is not treated soon enough, or doesn't die from the initial impact.

Kelly extends a hand to help Fred up, which he accepts...with his good arm. Fred wasn't going to fall for that old trick. So Kelly smacks him on the arm for good measure. The language Fred used to describe what kind of person Kelly was would have made an ODST blush.

"Man up Fred â€“ you've had worse" remarks Kelly, side hurting from the laughing. She draws the upturned curve of a smile over her helmet to show there were no hard feelings.

"Are you two finished? Or do I have to put you on latrine duty for a month?" Says the Master Chief, not looking up from the crate he was rummaging looking for any remaining supplies in the compartments of the upturned Warthog.

The two Spartans replied with a chorus "No, Master Chief!" and immediately walked off to secure the perimeter, Fred walking to the mangled and battered corpses to check for anything of use, flexing his shoulder as he did so.

After Kelly and Linda finally reached their elevated firing point, it was only a matter of time until the Covenant broke off the attack and ran. They didn't get very far, Linda picked off the remaining few Grunts and Jackals with ease, as was the case when these lower Covenant species lose their leadership.

"_Cowards" _Thought Fred as he toyed with a Plasma Pistol.

"He's all patched up chief, we're good to go". Said Kelly, passing

John as she walked up the street in the opposite direction from where they were engaged.

So far 117's digging had turned up a few satisfying results, as well as a few bad results too. After turning the Warthog inside out John had found at least five good clips of HE rounds for his and Kelly's assault rifles, ten rounds for Linda's sniper rifle and several grenades.

What wasn't so good was, there were only four shotgun rounds and, what with the amount of fire Kelly was pouring on the enemy with the rocket launcher, were no more rockets; they'd be in trouble if they came across heavy armour. The team would have to resort to using some Covenant weapons if they didn't want to get too up close and personal with any more troops they may encounter.

Linda provides top cover, but all is quiet.

She surveys the street with eyes like a hawk, watching for something, anything to move in the roadway below that wasn't friendly, when she catches a glimpse of something in her peripheral vision.

Linda swings her long rifle round in a graceful arc and dropping to a knee to be faced with nothing. She could have sworn she had seen movement in the tower block adjacent, she watched for a few moments more, scanning the windows but nothing even twitches.

"Just a ghost, a ghost in a dead city" she sighs, turning back round to the street, she made sure she kept one eye on the tower block beside her.

John sighs to clear his head, "Ok, Blue Team, let's move out. We need to link up with Noah and his squad, conserve your ammunition, there's not a lot left, try to keep to your pistols unless situation dictates" His voice flat, but authoritative. "Kelly share out the ammo, I'll carry the med kit".

"Roger that chief" replies Kelly taking the last couple of shotgun shells to Fred and couple of spare magazines for her rifle.

Fred and Linda's status lights on the chiefs HUD wink green, acknowledging the order.

The three in the road jogged to positions at the end of the street, away from the carnage they'd inflicted, stacking up on the corner of the building Kelly and Linda had provided cover from. They'd have to wait for Linda; fifteen flights of damaged stairs are tricky to traverse at best, even for a Spartan.

Blue Team needed to head south west from their current position. John calculated that if they were able to stick to the surface streets and not run into any trouble they should reach the park by sundown. That's if his luck would hold out.

In three hours Blue team had managed to travel twenty three blocks, meaning they were only, according to the Master Chiefs tactical map, about eight blocks away from the edges of the park. They had had to stop several times to let patrols pass, or divert if necessary. John believed they were making good time seeing as they had to do a little wet work on a stubborn group of Jackals that didn't want to get out

of the Spartans way.

Their blades did all the handiwork, not a single shot was fired by either party. The only things left behind were the bodies of a half dozen jackals with slit throats and broken necks.

His luck was holding.

This was why he couldn't work out how things could go so wrong, so quickly.

4. Chapter 4

Chapter 4

The hairs on Monty's neck are standing up. Something's wrong. He always got like this when trouble was brewing it was his, 'sixth sense'.

Monty's nest is sitting on the very corner of the city's park, with the LZ half a mile deeper in a clearing where families would have once gone for picnics and where children could play in the playground.

The "park" could pass as a forest, and is easily four miles in diameter. The park is one of a hundred in the city which covers about a third of the planet, designed to let the inhabitants of this metropolis feel the pleasure of grass beneath their feet.

The parks themselves used to be maintained by thousands of members of staff. All of which were now either off planet or dead.

Yellow team had picked a tactically perfect spot for an LZ. The park was high ground, the ground sloping up gradually towards its peak at the centre of the park where an information kiosk, sports fields and tennis courts were located. The LZ was further down the slope to the North on an hundred metre square patch of grass surrounded by thick, tall trees and other dense vegetation growth. There were only two entrances to the large patch of open grass, one, leading to the summit, which Tim had heavily booby trapped, and the North park entrance, where Monty 088 now sat.

Monty peers through his scope and sees the same thing he's been looking at for two days. Nothing, which is exactly the problem. Every shred of nerve in young Spartans body is telling him the enemy is out there watching. This frustrates him, and worries him. The covenant never holds off from an attack, especially when the Brutes are in charge, why now?

He scans round to the left of the eight lane carriageway when something catches his eye. A pile of concrete rubble shimmered as if he was looking at heat haze. Impossible, the temperature was a mild 11°C according to his HUD; the sun simply wasn't strong enough today to bake the tarmac.

His instincts were right.

Cloaking technology.

They're about a half mile out at the moment, but closing fast; Spartan 088 surmises the enemy is moving at a quick march so the cloaking shimmers as little as possible.

Monty curses himself for not picking things up sooner. Damn it he was better than that.

Monty keys his mike.

"Chief we're about to have some very unwelcome house guests" said Monty, tension brewing in his voice; he was spoiling for a decent fight.

"Report 088, be advised we are on the move to your location" Replies his team leader.

"I've got multiple contacts, they're ghosting Chief, ETA two minutes" informs the scout, with a sly grin, he pans left and right seeing more and more near invisible silhouettes.

"You got the shot?" comes the reply, Michelle this time, static faintly crackling on the link due to the density of the Forrest between the warriors.

"I have the shot" Says Monty, the excitement in his voice mounting, waiting for the kill order to unleash hell on the enemies of mankind, his breathing is slow and relaxed despite his blood lust.

"Start the party 088, Light them up" replies Noah 133.

This is it the moment Monty's been waiting for what seems like an eternity, he switches to thermal imaging- which he disliked, it was cumbersome, and was prone to malfunctions, but he gambled that he would only need it for a maximum of three shots, then he could go back to his normal scope.

Monty takes a deep breath in and lines up with the biggest multicoloured blob within range; _"by god there are a lot of heat signatures" _he thought â€“ he was fine with that, it just meant there were more for him to kill.

From the looks of it it's a Brute, a large Brute; no doubt a Chieftain, its headgear was clearly recognisable. He aims for its chest, and lets out the breath he's been holding slowly.

Monty squeezes the trigger; the buck of the rifle feeling like the pat on the shoulder of an old friend. Monty readjusts his aim instantly and pulls it a second time, the kill shot.

The two rounds leave the rifle and travel the fifty or so meters the Brute Chieftain has stomped between Spartan 133 and the half mile mark, in 1.296 seconds. The first round finds its mark, dead centre of the large brutes' chest plate, overloading its personal shield and cloaking device with a burst of static charge. Monty has the element of surprise, the chieftain recoiling in the horror of the moment; it raises its head to see what had dealt him the hammer blow that has revealed his location to the elements. It's the last thing this Brute will ever do, as the second round explodes its skull from the forehead up in a splash of red mist. This hulking giants life has ended. Violently. Yellow Teams first kill on this world. It won't be

their last.

The "CRACK CRACK" of Monty's first kill is soon drowned out by a sea of angry roars. The brutes, realising they've lost the element of surprise disable their cloaking devises, and charge.

"So predictable" thinks the Sniper and readjusts his aim.

The moving wall of hair, muscle and teeth does not faze the Spartan, Monty is shooting in a target rich environment, and not even a rookie Marine could miss targets in the sheer volume of Covenant facing him. There must be dozens of brutes heading directly towards him, charging on all fours like the Gorillas of old. He fires again and again, still they advance. At least seven bodies are littering the street by the time the rest of Yellow Team shows up.

"Welcome to the party Yellow team" says Spartan 198, still hammering away with his sniper rifle. Swapping out spent cartridges for new ones methodically.

"I sure as hell hope you're saving me some Monty, I've only got a limited range with this thing" Says Michelle, referring to her shotgun, adrenaline and anticipation might as well have been dripping from her armour joints.

"I'm sure there'll be plenty to go around" announces Noah. Standing beside her, rifle raised, Tim bringing up the rear.

"Holy crap that's a lot of Brutes, I can smell them from here", rolling into a crouch position behind a fallen log " strategically placed by him earlier, extending the bipod on his M739 to rest on the dead bark of the old tree trunk.

"Engage at will Yellow Team!" orders the Chief Petty Officer

"You don't need to tell me twice" mumbles Tim, pulling the trigger.

5. Chapter 5

Chapter 5

The Brutes are closer now, much closer, they're less than three hundred metres away, charging headlong into heavy fire, they're tough to kill and they know it. Some have their primitive weapons raised and shoot sporadically at the human daemons confronting them.

Noah, Monty and Tim continue to fire into the mass of Brute flesh bearing down on them, the ground is literally shaking beneath the three Spartans who weren't ten meters high in a tree. Those Brutes that die crash to the ground, tumbling, cart wheeling, spinning until they come to an abrupt halt on the tarmac in a pool of their own bodily fluid.

Michelle is becoming impatient at the site of her teammates getting all the kills. She constantly shifts her stance, waiting for the fight to come to her, she switches on her loud speaker so she can be sure the Brutes can hear her.

"C'mon Motherfuckers! Come and get me!"

Tim chuckles to himself, he's always loved Michelle's spirit ever since they were little. He knows they won't understand her, but it was still funny, "_We are Spartans, Spartans never die" _he thinks to himself.

A wall of flame and shrapnel erupts in front of the Spartans a hundred meters in front of their position. Tim's welcoming present of buried claymores had greeted the charging Brute pack like a slap in the face. A half dozen were killed instantly; another half dozen had received mortal wounds and would die within a few minutes, sprawled on the floor, missing limbs and howling in pain. Monty saw a Brute thundering on, its fur alight before its mind caught up with its body and collapsed into a burning heap. The smell of cooked meat filled the air.

Those on the ground, dyeing were put out of their misery moments later as they were trampled to death by the two dozen Brutes that remained, still charging at full tilt.

At fifty meters out, over half of the enemy host had been slaughtered. It was also the moment that Michelle's wish was granted, her pump action shotgun spouts fire and death in the direction of her attackers, with the rapid "chunk chunk BANG!" of Michelle unloading all her shells at a rate faster than mechanically advised on the shotguns stamp.

Brute limbs are sawn off, one is completely blown off its feet, and she uses all six shots in seconds. 022 throws down her shotgun and sprints into the oncoming tide of Brutes, she pulls out a set of three throwing knives from the pouch on her calve and throws them, the three knives resemble gleaming silver rain as they fly towards the Brute charging her, one of the knives hit exactly where she wanted, right in the Brutes weak spot, the jugular, the second cutting a gash across the monsters scalp as it deflects off the Brutes head, the third burying itself in the meat of its chest.

The Brute gurgles, eyes bulging, it goes to grab the knives lodged in its throat, but its momentum carries it on, its stride broken the beast loses his footing and stumbles to the floor.

Michelle spots an opportunity. Her pace quickens and she takes a stepâ€¦ onto the still falling Brutes head, and launches herself into the oncoming horde, pushing the Brutes head down with such force she shattered its jaw. Mid-air 022 unleashes her twenty centimetre long blades from the sheaths in her armour on her upper arms and stretches her arms wide, looking like a bird of prey swooping to collect her quarry in her talons, she slices two Brutes across the face before she even touches the floor.

She lands and rolls, severing Brute flesh, muscle and tendons before standing up in a open fighting stance; body side on to her enemies, presenting a smaller target, legs wide and bent for stabilisation, right fist up to her face, left fist in front of her body at chest height. She smiles.

Chief Petty Officer Noah 133 is sighting through the scope of his Battle Rifle. Time has slowed down. This state of time is not an unusual thing to him, it's happened countless times in his lifetime,

and he welcomes it. He regards Brutes in full charge, watching their ugly forms approaching him at what seems like a snail's pace. He sees their drooling, snarling faces, eyes full of nothing but hatred and hunger.

He lines the closest in his cross hairs, dead centre of its face, between the eyes and squeezes. The rifle taps his shoulder three times. In his peripheral vision he can see the still smoking shell casings swirling away like discarded children's toys. And watches with grim satisfaction as the three rounds find their mark, enveloping the Brutes face in on itself like an enclosing flower.

There is no time for celebration as the Brute next to the one with a now inside out face lunges at the Spartans leader.

Noah, still seeing things in fight time, calmly side steps the Brute, ducks his torso beneath the monsters outstretched meaty paw and cracks the butt of his rifle in the back of his assailants head - knocking the beast out cold, its unconscious form smacking into the ground with a meaty thud. Noah mercifully puts the Brute out of its misery with a stomp of his boot. The brutes skull making a sickening crunch as it gives way beneath the force of the blow.

Noah turns back around and resumes shooting.

Slow motion doesn't occur for Tim. Everything is happening in real time and the fight is chaos, he has had his finger depressed on the trigger of his SAW for the entire fight, releasing it only to change ammo drums. According to his ammo counter, he'd already burned through forty five rounds of his second drum, when the Brute that he had already shot, its flesh was pot marked with freely running, bloody wounds.

It leapt arms out, mouth gaping, full of fangs.

Tim ducked, and then pushed swiftly upwards while the hulking primate was still in midair, sending the beast rolling off his back and onto the floor, looking up into the grey afternoon sky.

Before the Brute had time to even realise what had happened, 106 had turned and placed his armoured boot on its throat, crushing its windpipe, "Don't Fuck with me!" the big Spartan bellowed and fired a short burst of his machine gun into the things face.

Michelle strikes out repeatedly, slashing and cutting everything within range. Spinning and striking. She resembles a dancer graciously pivoting and kicking, if it wasn't so deadly, it might even be beautiful. 022 is dimly aware that her squad is still picking off targets behind her. She bears no mind as her armour becomes slick with arterial blood and gore.

The ranks of the enemy is becoming thinner as the body count continues to climb, Michelle turns, toe to toe with a huge Brute, one of its arms, the size of a small tree trunk swings for her, but size does not matter in this fight, the Brute cannot match Michelle's speed as she easily ducks and dodges every incoming blow, before elbowing the muscular giant in the face, knocking teeth into the back of its throat. The Brute, seeing stars and tasting blood, loses its footing and falls. Michelle sees this encircles the monster, dragging

her knife along its belly, spilling yellow guts onto the black tarmac; she wraps her free arm around its neck, slitting its throat

Her guard is down.

Whilst her back is turned a Brute charges her and launches itself into the air, fists raised, ready to pound the daemon that killed its pack brothers into the ground.

A rifle is raised, and fires its three round burst at the Brutes skull.

The beasts head explodes in an awesome display of human firepower, its limp body sent cart wheeling to the floor, hitting inches from where Michelle is crouching.

"Thanks" says a panting Michelle

"You're welcome" replies her team leader.

The four Spartans survey the carnage in front of them. "Clear?" Asks the Yellow Team leader Noah 133.

"Clear" pants Michelle 022.

"I'm Clear" replies Monty 088, eye still hovering over the carcass of his final headshot.

"Really Clear" says Tim 106 walking away from the pulped Brute at his feet.

The team didn't have time to even regroup when their radios buzz with static, and whistles briefly. "Yellow 1, this is Blue 1" â€“ was that you making that racket?" It was the Master Chief.

He, the rest of Blue Team and their precious cargo were no more than two blocks away.

The Chief Petty Officer keyed his mike, turning away from the scene of battle in front of him, Tim walks over to Michelle, the two comrades fist bump as Monty begins his climb down from his hide.

"Confirmed Blue 1 â€“ Good to hear from you, is the package secure?"

John 117, "Roger Yellow 1, package is sec-"

John never had the chance to finish his sentence before the heavens exploded with the crack of thunder and flames.

Authors note:- Congratulations, you've stuck it out long enough to get to the fifth chapter â€“ you deserve a medal, which I'm unfortunately fresh out of (go figure). If you like what you see by all means tell me so, and that doubly applies for you telling me how I can improve! 'till next time - KhakiSuperBunny_

End

file.